Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method for searching an electronic program guide, comprising the steps of:

obtaining a list of available programs;

generating a user query in response to a user command, said user query specifying at least one attribute-value pair for each of a plurality of program attributes, wherein at least one of said attribute-value pairs is selected based on a prior query; and

comparing attributes of said available programs to said attribute-value pairs in said query to identify programs satisfying said query.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said generating step is performed automatically in response to said user command.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said user command is a single button click.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said at least one of said attribute-value pairs selected based on a prior search is obtained using the top-N search terms (where N is a positive number) that have been previously used in a query for said attribute.

5. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of receiving one or more default terms for a given attribute that supercede said corresponding top-N search terms.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of decomposing said query to identify attribute-value pairs contained in said query and incrementing a counter indicating a number of times each of said attribute-value pairs appears in a user query.

7. A method for constructing a query of an electronic program guide, comprising the steps of:

receiving a command from a user initiating said query;

retrieving one or more prior queries performed by said user; and

generating said query comprised of at least one attribute-value pair for each of a plurality of program attributes, wherein at least one of said attribute-value pairs is selected based on said prior queries.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein said generating step is performed automatically in response to said user command.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein said user command is a single button click.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein said at least one of said attribute-value pairs selected based on said prior queries is obtained using the top-N search terms (where N is a positive number) that have been previously used in a query for said attribute.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of receiving one or more default terms for a given attribute that supercede said corresponding top-N search terms.

12. The method of claim 7, further comprising the steps of decomposing said query to identify attribute-value pairs contained in said query and incrementing a counter indicating a number of times each of said attribute-value pairs appears in a user query.

13. A method for constructing a query of an electronic program guide, wherein said query is comprised of at least one attribute-value pair for each of a plurality of program attributes, comprising the steps of:

receiving a command from a user initiating said query;

retrieving the top-N (where N is greater than or equal to zero) attribute-value pairs for each possible attribute based on a number of times said attribute-value pairs have previously been utilized in a query; and

constructing said query with said top-N attribute-value pairs for each possible attribute unless a default attribute-value pair has been specified for a given attribute.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein said constructing step is performed automatically in response to said user command.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein said user command is a single button click.

16. The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of receiving one or more default terms for a given attribute that supercede said corresponding top-N search terms.

17. The method of claim 13, further comprising the steps of decomposing said query to identify attribute-value pairs contained in said query and incrementing a counter indicating a

number of times each of said attribute-value pairs appears in a user query.

18. A system for searching an electronic program guide, comprising:

a memory for storing computer readable code; and

a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to:

obtain a list of available programs;

generate a user query in response to a user command, said user query specifying at least one attribute-value pair for each of a plurality of program attributes, wherein at least one of said attribute-value pairs is selected based on a prior query; and

compare attributes of said available programs to said attribute-value pairs in said query to identify programs satisfying said query.

19. A system for constructing a query of an electronic program guide, comprising:

a memory for storing computer readable code; and

a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to:

receive a command from a user initiating said query;

retrieve one or more prior queries performed by said user; and

generate said query comprised of at least one attribute-value pair for each of a plurality of program attributes, wherein at least one of said attribute-value pairs is selected based on said prior queries.

20. A system for constructing a query of an electronic program guide, wherein said query is comprised of at least one attribute-value pair for each of a plurality of program attributes, comprising:

a memory for storing computer readable code; and

a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to:

receive a command from a user initiating said query;

retrieve the top-N (where N is greater than or equal to zero) attribute-value pairs for each possible attribute based on a number of times said attribute-value pairs have previously been utilized in a query; and

construct said query with said top-N attribute-value pairs for each possible attribute unless a default attribute-value pair has been specified for a given attribute.

21. An article of manufacture for searching an electronic program guide, comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable code means embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means comprising:

a step to obtain a list of available programs;

a step to generate a user query in response to a user command, said user query specifying at least one attribute-value pair for each of a plurality of program attributes, wherein at least one of said attribute-value pairs is selected based on a prior query; and

a step to compare attributes of said available programs to said attribute-value pairs in said query to identify programs satisfying said query.

22. An article of manufacture for constructing a query of an electronic program guide, comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable code means embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means comprising:

a step to receive a command from a user initiating said query;

a step to retrieve one or more prior queries performed by said user; and

a step to generate said query comprised of at least one attribute-value pair for each of a plurality of program attributes, wherein at least one of said attribute-value pairs is selected based on said prior queries.

23. An article of manufacture for constructing a query of an electronic program guide, wherein said query is comprised of at least one attribute-value pair for each of a plurality of program attributes, comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable code means embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means comprising:

a step to receive a command from a user initiating said query;

a step to retrieve the top-N (where N is greater than or equal to zero) attribute-value pairs for each possible attribute based on a number of times said attribute-value pairs have previously been utilized in a query; and

a step to construct said query with said top-N attribute-value pairs for each possible attribute unless a default attribute-value pair has been specified for a given attribute.